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# An Experiment in Gyro-Hats



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*Samuel Gompers.*

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JUL 17 1925

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# An Experiment in Gyro-Hats

By ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

*Author of "Pigs is Pigs," etc.*

Illustrations by ALBERT LEVERING

SPECIAL EDITION

THE Q AND C Co.

NEW YORK AND CHICAGO

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# An Experiment in Gyro-Hats

By ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

*Author of "Pigs is Pigs," etc.*

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THE idea of a gyro-hat did not come to me all at once, as some great ideas come to inventors; and in fact I may say that but for a most unpleasant circumstance I might never have thought of gyro-hats at all, although I had for many years been considering the possibility of utilizing the waste space in the top of silk hats in some way or other. As a practical hat dealer and lover of my kind, it had always seemed to me a great economical waste to have a large vacant space inside the upper portion of top hats, or high hats, or "stove-pipe" hats, as they are variously called. When a shoe is on, it is full of foot, and when a glove is on, it is full of hand; but a top hat is not, and never can be, full of head, until such a day as heads assume a cylindrical shape, perfectly flat on top. And no sensible man ever expects that day to come.

I had, therefore, spent much of my leisure in devising methods by which the vacant space above the head in high hats might be turned to advantage, and my patents ranged all the way from a small filing cabinet that just occupied the waste space, to an extensible hat rack on the accordion plan that could be pushed

compactly into the top of the top hat when the hat was worn, but could be extended into a hat and coat rack when the hat was not in use. This device should have been very popular, but I may say that the public received the idea coldly.

My attention had been for some time drawn away from this philanthropic work by certain symptoms of uneasiness I noticed in my daughter Anne, and my wife and I decided after careful consideration that Anne must be in love, and that her love must be unhappy. Otherwise we could not account for the strange excitability of our usually imperturbable daughter. As a practical hat dealer my time has been almost exclusively devoted to hats and, as a good wife, my companion's attention has been almost exclusively devoted to her husband, while Anne was usually so calm and self-contained that she did not take my attention from my hat business at all. But when such a daughter suddenly develops signs of weeping and sighs and general nervousness, any father, no matter how devoted to the hat trade, must pay attention.

One of the primary necessities of a dealer in good hats is calm. An ordinary hat dealer may not need calm. He may buy his hats as another dealer buys flour, in the bulk, and then trust to advertisements to sell them; but I am not that kind of hat dealer. Hat dealing is an art with me, and great art requires calm and peace in order that it may reach its highest development.



When I buy hats I do not think of dozens and dollars. No, indeed; I think of noses and ears. To be able to buy of a manufacturer a hat that will make the pug nose and big ears of a man I have never seen seem normal and beautiful when that man enters my store and buys a hat, requires calm. And no hatter can have calm in his soul while his daughter is love sick and unhappy. I demand happiness about and around me, and I must have it. So I told my wife, and I told her so most emphatically, and I informed her that Anne must become happy at once.

Perhaps you can imagine the shock I received when my wife, after making the necessary inquiries of Anne, informed me that Anne was indeed in love, and in love with Walsingham Gribbs. It was not because Walsingham Gribbs had never bought a hat of me that I was shocked. Bad hats are a common failing of mankind, and a man will try a hundred hatters before he at last comes to me.

The trouble was deeper than this. The thing that staggered me was that Walsingham was a staggerer. (This is a joke, but I hold that a hatter has as good a right to make a joke as the next man.)

That my daughter had fallen in love with Walsingham Gribbs without having met him was altogether to her credit. She first saw him when she was crossing the ocean (for she travels where she pleases, my hat business affording her such pleasures) and that he reeled

and staggered about the boat did not impress her, for it was a stormy trip and everyone aboard reeled and staggered, even the captain of the boat. But when she returned to New York and saw Walsingham Gribbs on the firm pavement of Fifth Avenue, she had a harsh, cruel disillusionment. Walsingham Gribbs reeled and staggered on *terra firma*.

I am glad to say that my daughter saw at once the impossibility of the daughter of a high-class hatter mating with a permanent staggerer. As she realized this, she became sad and nervous, thus creating an atmosphere in my home that was quite opposed to the best high-class hatting, irritating my faculties and threatening to reduce me to the state of a mere commercial hatter.

Further investigation only made the matter seem worse, for quiet inquiries brought out the information that Walsingham Gribbs had been staggering since the year his father died. He had been constantly in a reeling, staggering state since his twentieth birthday. For such a man reform is, indeed, impossible. And what made the case more sad was that all proof seemed to point to the fact that Walsingham Gribbs was not a "bounder" nor a "rounder," two classes of men who occasionally acquire a stagger and a reel in company with hearty boon companions.

In short, no one had ever seen Walsingham Gribbs take a drink in public, and I was forced to conclude

that he was of that horrid type that drinks alone—"Alone but with unabated zeal" as that great poet, Sir Walter Scott, has remarked in one of his charming poems.

If all these investigations of mine were conducted without the knowledge of Walsingham Gribbs, you must admit I did only what was right in keeping them secret from him; for since he had never met my daughter he might have considered the efforts of a perfect stranger to peer into his life as being uncalled for. My wife did what she could to comfort Anne, but Anne sadly replied that she could never marry a man that staggered and reeled day in and day out. Thus day by day she became more sad, and I became so upset that I actually sold a narrow-brimmed derby hat to a man with wide, outstanding ears.

Of course this could not go on. No high-grade hat business could support it, and I was standing in my shop door looking gloomily out when I chanced to see Walsingham Gribbs stagger by. I had seen him many times, but now, for the first time I noticed what I should have noticed before—that he invariably wore a high hat, or "topper," as our customers like to call them.

I observed that the shape was awful, and that the hat badly needed the iron, and then my mind recurred to the old problem of the vacant space in the top of top hats; but I found I could not concentrate. Whenever I tried to think of top hats I thought of Walsingham

Gibbs in one of them, staggering and reeling up the street, and gradually the thought came that it would be an excellent idea should I be able so to use the space in the top of Walsingham's hat that he would no longer stagger and reel, and then the thought of the gyroscope hat came to me.

I admit that at first I put the idea aside as futile, but it came back again and again, and at length it seemed to force me into enthusiasm. I dropped everything and went to work on the gyro-hat.

The gyroscope is, as everyone knows, a top, and I might have called the hat I invented a top hat, except that any tall cylindrical silk or beaver hat is called a top hat, so I was forced to adopt the name of gyro-hat.

A gyroscope is not an ordinary top. It is like a heavy fly wheel, revolving on an axis; and if it is spun, the speed of the revolutions maintains the axis in the perpendicular. A huge gyroscope is used to steady the channel steamers, which would otherwise stagger and reel. A gyroscope has just been adopted to the monorail cars, and so long as the gyroscope gyrates the monorail car cannot stagger or reel. If a proper gyroscope was placed on the end of a knitting needle and gyrated at full speed, that knitting needle could be stood on end and it would not fall over.

Therefore, if a gyroscope was placed in the top of a top hat, and the top hat firmly fastened to the head of a man, and the gyroscope set going, that man would

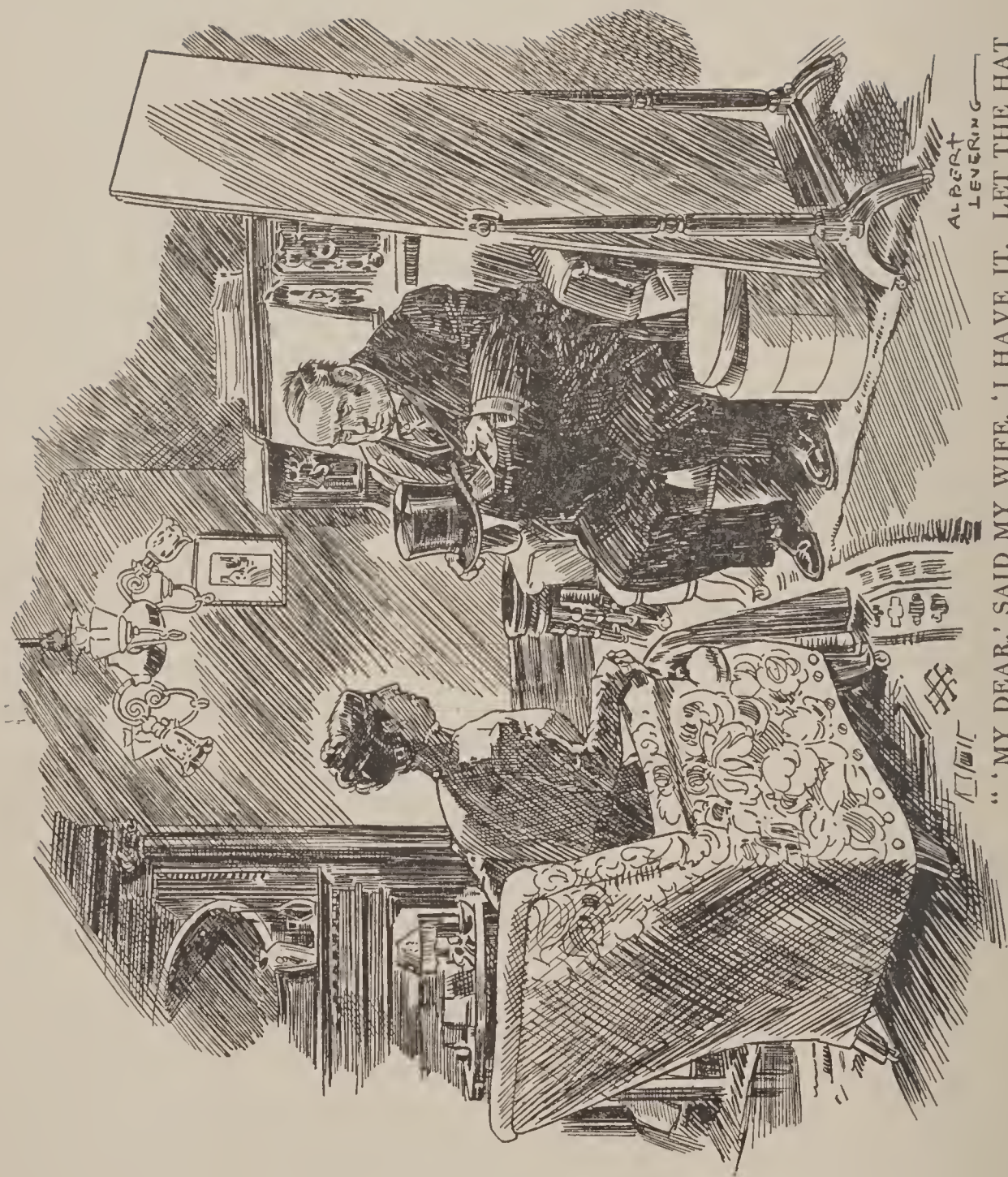


remain perpendicular in spite of anything. He could not stagger. He could not reel. He could walk a line as straight as a crack.

When I had completed this gyro-hat I showed it to my wife, and briefly explained what it was and what I meant to do with it. The small but wonderfully powerful motor and the gyroscope itself were all concealed inside the hat, and I explained to my wife that Walsingham Gribbs need but fasten the hat firmly on his head and he would never stagger again. At first my wife seemed doubtful, but as I went on she became enthusiastic.

The only thing she disliked was the method of fastening the hat to the head, for, as it was quite necessary that the hat be very firmly fixed to the head, I had sewed ear tabs to the hat, and these I tied firmly under my chin. My wife said she feared it would require some time to persuade the public to take to silk hats with ear tabs, and that the sight of a man in a silk hat with ear tabs would be a sign that he was a staggerer. She wanted another method of holding the hat on the head.

“Vacuum suction,” I said, for I am quick to catch an idea. A man has to be, in the hat business. “But,” I added, “where would you get the vacuum? A man cannot be expected to carry a can of vacuum, or whatever he would need to carry vacuum in, around with him; especially the kind of man that would need the gyro-hat.”



ALBERT  
LEVERING

" 'MY DEAR,' SAID MY WIFE, 'I HAVE IT. LET THE HAT  
MAKE ITS OWN VACUUM.' "



“My dear,” said my wife, after a minute of thought, during which we both studied the gyro-hat, “I have it! Let the hat make its own vacuum. If the hat is lined with air-tight aluminum, and has a rubber sweat-band, and an expulsion valve, the gyroscope motor could pump the air out itself. It could create its own vacuum.”

“Of course it could!” I exclaimed. “I could rig it up so that putting the hat on the head would start the gyroscope, and the gyroscope would pump a vacuum. All any staggerer would need to do would be to put on his hat, and the hat would do the rest. It would stay on his head and it would keep him evenly on his keel.” (Of course I would not use a nautical term like “keel” in my hat shop, but at home I allow myself some liberties of that sort.)

I set to work at once to perfect the gyro-hat on the plan suggested by my wife and in a few days I was able to say it was a success. By this I mean it was a success in so far as the eye could judge by looking at the hat, and all that was needed was a practical trial.

As the hat had been invented for Walsingham Gribbs more than for any other man, I proposed to my wife that Walsingham—we had spoken of him so often that we now mentioned him as Walsingham—should be the man to try it out. But my wife is better posted in social matters than I, and she said it would not do at all to attempt such a thing.

In the first place, none of us knew Walsingham; and in all the other places, it would be insulting to suggest such a thing to him, and might ruin Anne's chances. I then assured my wife that I did not mean to allow any ordinary intoxicated man to experiment with the only gyro-hat I possessed, and possibly wreck and ruin it. We had too much at stake for that. So, after considerable discussion, my wife and I decided upon what was, after all, the only rational course—I should try out the gyro-hat myself.

I admit here that I am not much of a drinker. Although not so by principle, I am by action a teetotaler. I consider that the highest good of a hat shop demands it. As a matter of fact I had never up to this time tasted intoxicating liquor, but it was evident to my wife and me that the time had arrived when the hat business demanded this sacrifice on my part. Evidently, if a gyro-hat is meant to keep a staggerer and reeler steady on his keel, the only test of the gyro-hat must be on the head of a man who, without the hat, could not help staggering and reeling—a thoroughly intoxicated man.

We did not, of course, admit Anne into our little conspiracy, and we chose a restaurant where we were sure intoxicants would be sold. We proceeded to the restaurant about the dinner hour; and after studying the waiters carefully, I selected one that seemed likely to know something about intoxicants, and we seated

ourselves at his table. I placed the gyro-hat carefully across my knees, first setting the starter, and beckoned the waiter to us.

“My good fellow,” I said, when he had approached with his pencil and order card in hand, “I desire to become intoxicated this evening, and I presume you know something about intoxicating liquors.”

“Yes, sir,” said the waiter.

“Tell him, Henry,” said my wife, “that we also wish something to eat, but that as our principal object in coming here is to secure intoxicants, we wish him to be particular about them.”

“You have heard what the lady said,” I told the waiter, “and you will be guided accordingly.”

“Yes, sir,” said the waiter, politely. “Does the lady desire to become intoxicated also?”

“Heavens, no!” exclaimed my wife.

“Certainly not,” said the waiter.

“Now,” I said to the waiter, “you doubtless have different kinds of intoxicating liquors here—some strong and some not so strong—and I do not desire to drink a great quantity to obtain the result I desire. What would you recommend to give the required reeling and staggering condition as quickly as possible?”

“Well, sir,” he said, “if you will let me advise, I would advise a certain brandy we have. Of that brandy, sir, a little goes a long way. I have seen it





“‘IF YOU PLEASE, SIR,’ SAID THE WAITER, ‘IF YOU WALK A FEW STEPS I CAN TELL MORE DEFINITELY.’”

work, sir, and I can assure you that a small quantity of that will make you stagger and reel to your heart's content."

"Very well," I said, "you may bring me some. I suppose a quart would be enough."

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, "but have you ever tried the brandy of which I speak?"

"I have not," I said.

"Then, sir," said the waiter apologetically, "unless you are a very heavy drinker I would not advise a quart of that brandy. A quart of that brandy, sir, would, if I may so speak, lay you out flat. You would not reel and stagger, sir. You would be paralyzed stiff, sir, dead to the world."

I thanked the waiter warmly.

"You observe," I said, "that I am not used to this sort of thing, and I appreciate the interest you are taking. I am inclined to leave the matter entirely in your hands. I may not know when I have had exactly the right quantity, but you, with your larger experience, will know, sir."

"Yes, sir. And I think the lady will know, sir," said the waiter.

I found the brandy most unpleasant to the taste, but certain symptoms assured me that the waiter had not belied its effectiveness. Long before the waiter was satisfied that I would stagger and reel, my long lost vocal prowess returned and I caroled gaily some songs



that had been favorites of my youth. Many of these were affectionate songs, and when I sang them I had a great longing to hold my wife's hand, and did so; but as she would not let me kiss her, I felt the need of kissing the waiter. Here again I was repulsed, but it did not make me angry. I merely slid down into my chair and waved my hand at him coquettishly.

"If you please, sir," said the waiter, when I had finished another burst of song, "I think you are pretty ripe, now. If you would just get up and walk a few steps I can tell more definitely."

My wife smiled at me reassuringly and nodded to me that what the waiter proposed had her full sanction; but even so, I was filled with a fear that we were about to be parted forever, and for a few minutes I clung to her neck, weeping bitter tears. I then tore myself away, and I did indeed stagger and reel. I believe I knocked over two small tables and ended by seating myself in the lap of a young man who was dining alone. He accepted my apology before I had spoken more than fifteen minutes of it, and then he aided the waiter in steering me back to my table.

Whatever may have been my past opinion of Walsingham Gribbs—for it was he—I loved him most dearly at that moment, and in my incoherent manner I tried to tell him so. I think he understood. At any rate, he spoke to my wife like a true gentleman.

"Madame," he said, "I can sincerely sympathize



with your husband, and if you will allow me, I will gladly help you assist him to a cab. I beg you not to be frightened by his condition. I myself am subject to the same trouble, and although he may seem drunk \_\_\_\_\_,”

“Seem drunk!” exclaimed my wife. “Seem drunk! I beg you to know that my husband is as drunk as a man can become without being senseless. Either that, or we have been defrauded by this waiter!”

Walsingham Gribbs looked at my wife, and then smiled.

“Very well,” he said, “if what you wanted was to have him drunk, I’ll admit that he is about the drunkest man I have ever seen. I only spoke as I did in order that I might spare your feelings, for most wives object to seeing their husbands stagger and reel. I myself stagger and reel continually, and I have never tasted intoxicating liquor in my life, but I can share the feelings of one who staggers and reels, or who has a relative that staggers and reels.”

At this my wife said:

“Are you not Walsingham Gribbs? If you are I am delighted to have met you, even in this unconventional manner, for what brought us here will interest you.”

She then told him of the gyro-hat I had invented, and explained just why I had come to this place and had swallowed the strong brandy. I took no part in this conversation, but Walsingham gladly agreed to accompany us, and he put my gyro-hat on my head.



" WHEN WALSINGHAM RE-  
LEASED MY HAND, I SLOWLY  
SWUNG UPRIGHT AGAIN  
ON THE PICKETS."

ALBERT  
LEVERIN

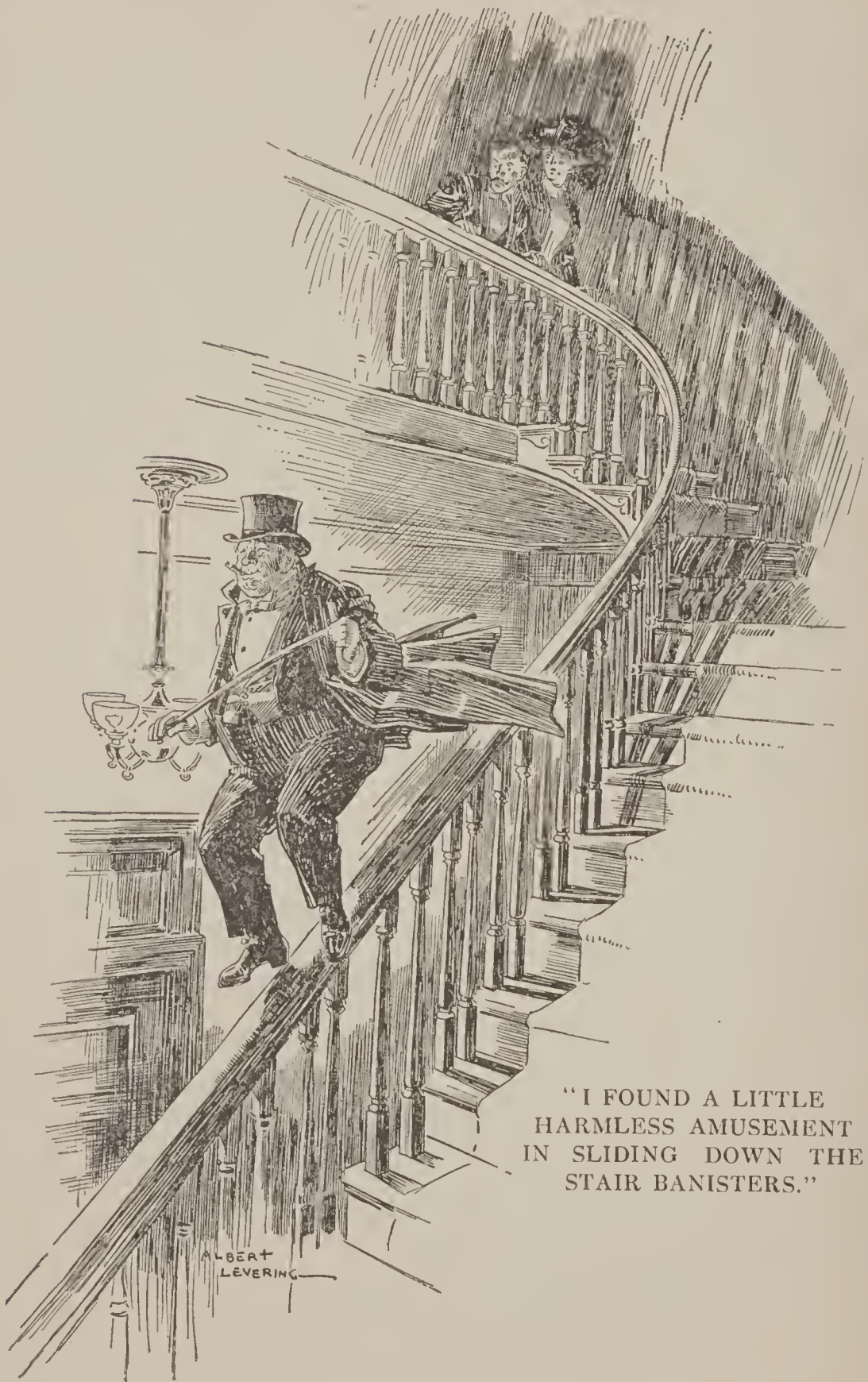


The result was indeed marvelous. Instantly the vacuum pump began to work and the gyroscope to revolve. My head, which had been lying on one side, straightened up. The rubber sweat band gripped my head tightly with a slight pulling sensation. Without assistance I arose from my chair and stood erect. My brain was still confused, but I walked as straight as a string direct to the door of the restaurant, and stood holding it open while my wife and Walsingham passed out.

The gyroscope was revolving at the rate of three thousand revolutions a minute, and the slight humming was hardly noticeable. I did not stagger and I did not reel. When I reached Gramercy Park I was full of glee. I had been walking on the edge of the curb, but I now desired to climb atop of the iron fence that surrounds the park, and walk on the points of the pickets.

My wife and Walsingham tried to dissuade me, but I climbed to the top of the fence. I not only walked on the points of the pickets easily, but I was able to place the end of one toe on the point of one picket, and thus balanced wave the other leg in the air. My wife and Walsingham Gribbs coaxed me to come down to the level of the walk, but as I saw no reason to do so, I flatly refused, and at last Walsingham reached up and took me by the hand and pulled me.

Ordinarily a man that had imbibed a quantity of brandy would have fallen to the street if pulled by one



"I FOUND A LITTLE  
HARMLESS AMUSEMENT  
IN SLIDING DOWN THE  
STAIR BANISTERS."

hand while standing on the top of a row of pickets, but I did not. When Walsingham pulled my hand I inclined gently toward him until I was at right angles to the picket fence, with my feet still on top of the pickets; and when he released my hand I slowly swung upright again, without any effort whatever on my part. I got down off that fence when I was ready, and not before.

There could be no doubt whatever that I was far more intoxicated than Walsingham Gribbs, and all the way home I gave vent to tremendous bursts of laughter over the idea that while Walsingham thought he was seeing me safely home I walked as straight and true as a general, and he staggered and reeled except when he clung closely to my arm.

Many persons stopped and looked at us, and I cannot wonder at it. For Walsingham is a young man of most dignified countenance, and it must have seemed strange to see a young man of such sober mien reeling drunkenly, while a dignified and steadily walking hatter laughed and shouted drunkenly. It was as if the two of us had been able to afford but one spree, and had divided it in that way, he taking the stagger and I taking the boisterousness.

My wife was much touched by the kind attentions of Walsingham, and when we reached home she invited him in, and while I found a little harmless amusement in walking up the stair banisters and sliding down them standing on my feet, which I was enabled to do because



of the steadying effect of the gyro-hat, she took Walsingham into the parlor and introduced him to Anne formally.

My poor daughter was quite overcome with embarrassment and pleasure, but when Walsingham was sitting he showed no evidence of his stagger and reel whatever, and they managed to become quite well acquainted while my wife was assisting me to bed.

Unfortunately I had neglected to arrange any method for letting the vacuum out of the gyro-hat, and although my wife tugged and pulled at the hat, the suction held it fast to my head and it refused to come off unless my scalp came with it. My wife decided that I must sleep in the hat, since I was in no condition of mind to do anything about it myself.

I was dying for sleep, and my wife tumbled me into bed and pulled the sheet over me, and that same instant I fell into a heavy slumber, but the moment my wife released her grasp on me I began arising to my feet, irresistibly drawn to the perpendicular by the action of the gyro-hat. I continued to arise until I was standing upright. I can only liken the manner in which I arose to the way a man might raise a stiff arm slowly until it pointed straight upward.

My wife immediately pushed me down onto the pillow again, but it was unavailing. Again the gyro-hat drew me to a standing position, and my wife was forced to let me continue my night's rest in that position.



The next morning I did not feel very well, but I never saw my wife in better spirits. She told me she was sure Walsingham had taken a great fancy to Anne, for he had asked permission to call again that evening, and my wife said that in her opinion it would be well to take up the matter of the marriage with Walsingham at once, before it went any further. If he meant business he would be glad to wear the hat and be rid of his stagger and reel; and if he meant nothing it would be a good thing to know it, and the sooner we were rid of him the better. I agreed with her fully, but I spent the day perfecting the vacuum outlet on the hat.

I must admit that Walsingham seemed somewhat surprised when I made the suggestion to him that evening. For a few minutes he did not seem to know what to say. Perhaps it was a little overcoming to have the parents of Anne suggest the idea of a marriage in this offhand manner and at the same time propose the wearing of a gyro-hat; but Walsingham was a gentleman, and when he glanced up, after his first surprise, and saw Anne gazing at him appealingly, with her hands clasped, I could see that love had won. But instead of acquiescing immediately, Walsingham Gribbs took one of Anne's hands in his, and after patting it, spoke directly to me.

"Sir," he said, "I cannot but appreciate the delicate manner in which you have handled this matter, but if I am only too glad to find that there is a hat that will

correct my unfortunate staggering and reeling, and if I am glad to accept your offer of that hat, I feel it due to myself to assure you that liquor has nothing whatever to do with my staggering and reeling. I am the victim of an unfortunate experience of my youthful days.

“My father was a man of many ideas, and always trying to make the world better. He had a neighbor that had a mule. It was a mouse-colored mule and very stubborn, and it used to wring my father’s heart to see the neighbor belabor that mule with a heavy whip, trying to make the mule proceed in a direction in which it did not wish to go. The mule was quite willing to go toward the barn, where the feed was kept; but it often refused to go in the opposite direction, although it would go well enough if it once started.

“My father, therefore, conceived the idea of what he called the Gibbs Mule Reverser. This was a circular platform large enough to hold a mule and his loaded wagon, and beneath the platform was a motor capable of revolving the platform. All that was necessary was to place the mule and the wagon on the platform and start the mule in the direction of home, and then suddenly turn the platform in the direction the mule was desired to go, and the mule would proceed, unwittingly in that direction.”

“A very excellent idea,” I said.

“Except that it would not work in the least,” said Walsingham. “In the first place, it was necessary to

dig a pit five feet square beneath the revolving platform to contain the motor, and this was not always convenient. In the second place, the platform and motor would hardly ever happen to be where the mule balked, and it would have been a great deal easier to load the mule on a wagon than to load the platform and motor on three wagons. And in the third place, if the mule would not start homeward, neither would it start onto the platform of the Mule Reverser.

“So, after my father had tried the platform in our back yard, with a mule on it, and the revolutions had thrown the mule up against the side of the barn, breaking both the mule and the barn, he decided that other things were better to invent and abandoned the platform. I and the lads of the neighborhood found this a good place to play, and one day I was standing exactly in the center of the platform when one of the boys happened to start the motor. I had sense enough to remain exactly in the center of the platform, or I would have been thrown off, and possibly killed, for the platform was revolving at the rate of eight thousand revolutions a minute. The motor had power to revolve the platform slowly when loaded with a mule and loaded wagon, so it was capable of immense speed with only a small boy on it.

“When my companions saw what they had done,” continued Walsingham, “they all ran away, and for four hours I remained in the center of that platform,



being revolved at an enormous speed, and when my father came home and stopped the platform I staggered and reeled and fell in a heap at his feet. That is how I acquired my unfortunate stagger and unpleasant reel, and I have only told you this that you may have no unjust suspicions."

"But why," asked my wife, who had been greatly interested by Walsingham's story, "do you not revolve in the opposite direction, and 'unwind' yourself, as we used to say?"

"Madame," said Walsingham, "I have. Every night, for one hour before I go to bed I revolve, but it requires an immense number of revolutions to overcome such a spin as I had in my youth." He waited a moment and then said: "But I am now ready to try the gyro-hat."

I looked out of the window, and hesitated. A thin rain was falling, and was freezing as it fell, and I hated to have a good, silk, gyro-hat go out into such weather; but as a leading hatter I felt that it would never do for me to seem small and picayunish in regard to hats. I remembered that a really good silk hat should not be ruined by a few drops of water; and I saw that if anything could convince Anne and Walsingham that the gyro-hat held their happiness, it would be a trial on such slippery walks as the evening had provided.

So I brought down the hat and pressed it on Walsingham's head. Instantly the vacuum creator began to

work and the hat clung fast to his head. He arose to his feet and walked across the parlor in a perfectly steady manner, and out into the hall. I held open the front door and he stepped out.

Walsingham crossed the porch with as steady a tread as ever any man crossed the porch of a high-class hatter, but when he reached the top step his foot struck the ice and he slipped. He did not stagger nor reel. If he fell, he fell steadily. I can best liken his fall to the action of a limber reed when the wind strikes it. He inclined slowly, with his feet still on the top step, and continued to incline until his head touched the walk below with considerable violence, and then his feet slipped down the edges of the steps until they rested on the walk.

I never saw a more graceful fall, and I was about to congratulate Walsingham, when he began to incline toward the perpendicular again, in the same slow manner. But this was not the reason I held my words. The reason was that the gyro-hat and Walsingham were behaving in a most unaccountable manner. Walsingham was revolving.

I discovered later that the fall had jammed the gyroscope on the pivot so that the gyroscope could not revolve without revolving the whole hat, and as the hat was firmly suctioned to Walsingham, the hat could not revolve without revolving Walsingham. For an instant Walsingham revolved away from us down the





ALBERT LEONARD

“‘I PROPOSE, MY DEAR,’ I SAID, ‘TO LET HIM SPIN UNTIL HE IS PERMANENTLY RECOVERED  
OR BECOME TOO PERMANENTLY DIZZY FOR ANY USE.’”



walk, and Anne gave a great cry; but almost at that moment Walsingham regained the upright and began to revolve rapidly. The icy walk offered no purchase for his feet, and this was indeed lucky; for if it had, his head would have continued to revolve none the less, and the effect would have been fatal.

I estimated that Walsingham was revolving at a rate of perhaps fifteen hundred revolutions a minute, and it was some minutes before my wife was able so far to recover from the shock of seeing her prospective son-in-law whirl thus as to ask me to stop him. My first impulse was to do so, but my long training as a hatter had made me a careful, thoughtful man, and I gently pushed my wife back.

“My dear,” I said, “let us pause and consider this case. Here we have Walsingham revolving rapidly. He is revolving in one of the only two directions in which he can revolve—the direction in which he revolved on the Mule Reverser, or the opposite direction. If it is the opposite direction all is well, for he will be unwound in a few hours, if his neck is not wrung in the meantime. If it is in the same direction it is no use to stop him now, for by this time he will be in such a condition of reeling and staggering that we would not have him as a son-in-law on any terms. I propose, therefore, to let him spin here for a few hours, when he will have had a full recovery or be permanently too dizzy for any use.”

My wife, and Anne too, saw the wisdom of this course, and as it was very miserable weather outside we all withdrew to my parlor, from the window of which we could watch Walsingham revolve. Occasionally, when he seemed about to revolve off the walk, I went out and pushed him on again.

I figured that by six o'clock in the morning he would be sufficiently revolved—provided he was revolving in the right direction—and at midnight I sent my wife and Anne to bed. I fear Anne slept but little that night, for she must have had a lover's natural anxiety as to how all was to turn out.

At six in the morning I called Anne and my wife, and we went into the yard to stop Walsingham, and it was not until I had carefully walked down the porch steps that it came to me that I had no way of stopping him whatever. To add to my dismay I knew that when the sun arose the thin ice would melt, and as Walsingham's feet could no longer slip easily, he would in all probability be wrenched in two, a most unsatisfactory condition for a son-in-law.

But while I was standing in dismay love found a way, as love always will, and Anne rushed to the cellar and brought out the stepladder and the ice pick. Placing the stepladder close to Walsingham she climbed it, and holding the point of the ice pick at the exact center of the top of the hat she pushed down. In a moment a sizzling noise told us that she had bored a hole in the

hat, letting the vacuum escape, and the hat flew from Walsingham's head.

Slower and slower he revolved, until he stood quite still, and then, without a reel or a stagger he walked up to me and grasped my hand, while tears told me the thanks he could not utter. He had revolved in the right direction! He was cured!













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